

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in light of the amendments and remarks herein.

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-5, 7-12, and 14-16 will be pending. By this amendment, claims 1, 7, 8, 14 and 15 have been amended. Claims 6, 13 and 17 have been canceled. No new matter has been added.

Allowable Subject Matter of Claims 6, 13, and 17

It is appreciatively noted that, in Section 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 6, 13, and 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim.

§102 Rejection of Claims 1-5, 7-12, and 14-16

In Section 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-5, 7-12, and 14-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Yamaguchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,795,097; hereinafter referred to as “Yamaguchi”).

Claims 1, 8, 14 and 15 closely parallel, and recite substantially similar limitations as claim 7. The allowable subject matter of claim 17 has been incorporated into claim 7. Therefore, claim 17 should be allowable over Yamaguchi. The allowable subject matter of claim 17 has also been incorporated into claims 1, 8, 14, and 15. Therefore, claims 1, 8, 14, and 15 should also be allowable over Yamaguchi. Further, since claims 2-5, 9-12, and 16 depend from one of claims 1, 7, and 8, claims 2-5, 9-12, and 16 should also be allowable over Yamaguchi.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, entry of this amendment, and the allowance of this application with claims 1-5, 7-12, and 14-16 are respectfully solicited.

In regard to the claims amended herein and throughout the prosecution of this application, it is submitted that these claims, as originally presented, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record, and that these claims were in full compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112. Changes that have been made to these claims were not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §§101, 102, 103 or 112. Rather, these changes were made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicant is entitled.

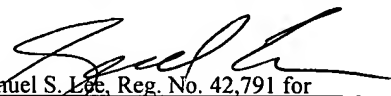
In the event that additional cooperation in this case may be helpful to complete its prosecution, the Examiner is cordially invited to contact Applicant's representative at the telephone number written below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any insufficient fees or credit any overpayment associated with the above-identified application to Deposit Account 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,

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